

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (01.03.2026)

1. S.I.R. EXERCISE CONCLUDES- 8% dips in number of electors in Bengal final rolls, another 8% await decision [PAPER-2]

Imp: SIR, Election Commission of India, Electoral rolls.

- Another 8% await decision: cases pending due to incomplete documents or objections
- The **Special Intensive Revision (SIR)** is a comprehensive exercise undertaken by the **Election Commission of India** to **verify, update, and purify electoral rolls** more rigorously than routine revisions.
- **Key Objectives**
 - **Remove ineligible names** (deceased, shifted, duplicate, or non-citizens)
 - **Include eligible voters** who were left out
 - **Ensure accuracy and credibility** of electoral rolls
 - **Prevent electoral malpractices** such as impersonation or bogus voting
- The SIR involves steps such as fresh enumeration forms, house-to-house verification by **Booth Level Officers (BLOs)**.
- **Constitutional & Legal Basis**
 - **Article 324** of the Constitution
 - Representation of the People Act, **1950**
 - Registration of Electors Rules, **1960**
- **Responsibilities:**
 - The **Chief Electoral Officer (CEO)** of each state or union territory is responsible for implementing SIR on the ground. Acting under the guidance of the Election Commission, the CEO coordinates with District Election Officers, Electoral Registration Officers, and Booth Level Officers.
 - The **Election Commission of India (ECI)** has launched the **next phase** of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls across **12 states and Union Territories**, including Tamil Nadu, Kerala, West Bengal, and Puducherry, ahead of upcoming Assembly elections. The process begins on **November 4, 2025**, covering over **51 crore voters**, with the final roll to be released on February 7, 2026.
 - Voters must prove eligibility using one of **13 documents**, including the Aadhaar card, a provision introduced after procedural reforms during the Bihar SIR.
- **Electoral Rolls:**
 - The electoral roll, also known as the **voter's list**, includes every person who is registered to vote in a designated area.
 - It is **regularly updated** to **add new voters** (typically those who have reached the age of **18**) and **remove individuals** who are **no longer eligible**, such as the **deceased** or those **disqualified by law**.
 - The preparation, revision, and maintenance of electoral rolls are **enshrined in the Constitution of India** (Articles 324, 325, 326) and governed by **the Representation of the People Act, 1950**.

• Deletions so far	
State/UT	% change in number of electors
Andaman & Nicobar	-16.87
Gujarat	-13.4
Chhattisgarh	-11.77
Tamil Nadu	-11.55
Goa	-10.75
West Bengal	-8.06
Madhya Pradesh	-5.97
Puducherry	-7.57
Rajasthan	-5.74
Kerala	-3.22
Lakshadweep	-0.36

2. U.S., Israel launches strikes on Iran

Imp: Geo-politics, Geographical location

Causes

- Iran's nuclear enrichment beyond JCPOA limits
- Failure of diplomacy / JCPOA revival
- Proxy attacks by Iran-backed groups (Hezbollah, Houthis, militias)
- Israel's pre-emptive security doctrine
- U.S. strategic interest in containing Iran & protecting Israel

Impact – Regional Level (West Asia)

- Risk of regional war (Israel–Hezbollah, Iran retaliation)
- Destabilization of Syria, Iraq, Lebanon
- Threat to Strait of Hormuz
- Rise in sectarian tensions

Impact – Global Level

- Oil price spike - global inflation
- Disruption of shipping & trade
- Weakening of international law / UNSC role
- Increased great power rivalry

India's Stand

- **Calls for restraint and de-escalation** to prevent further escalation and maintain regional stability.
- **Advocates dialogue and diplomacy** as the preferred means of conflict resolution.
- **Maintains strategic balancing** among Israel, Iran, and the U.S. in line with strategic autonomy.
- **Raises concerns over energy security and diaspora safety** due to India's stakes in the region.
- **Reaffirms commitment to the UN Charter and sovereignty** of all nations.



3. 20 burnt alive in A.P. firecracker unit blast [PAPER-3]

Imp: Disaster Management

- This is an industrial accident linked with hazardous material handling, raising issues of:
 - Compliance with factory & explosive regulations
 - Workers' rights and safety
 - Disaster preparedness and mitigation
- **Similar Industrial/Safety Incidents in India**
 - Bihar Firecracker Factory Blast – 2023
 - Visakhapatnam Gas Leak – 2020
 - Gujarat Chemical Plant Blast (2021)
 - Delhi ONGC Fire (2022)
- **Common Factors in Such Industrial / Firecracker Incidents**
 - **Regulatory Lapses:** Safety laws exist but are poorly enforced due to weak inspections and administrative negligence. This allows hazardous units to operate in violation of norms.

- **Over storage & Congestion:** Explosive and flammable materials are stored beyond permitted limits in confined spaces. This significantly increases the intensity of blasts and casualties.
- **Poor Safety Culture:** Units lack safety drills, protective equipment, and fire-suppression systems. Workers are rarely trained to handle emergencies or hazardous materials.
- **Informal & Untrained Workforce:** Most workers are daily-wage labourers with little awareness of safety protocols. Economic vulnerability forces them to work in unsafe conditions.
- **Weak Emergency Preparedness:** Absence of on-site disaster management plans delays response during accidents. Poor coordination worsens fatalities and injuries.
- **Reactive Governance Pattern:** Administrative action usually occurs after disasters in the form of suspensions and compensation. Structural safety reforms remain largely unimplemented.
- **Regulatory Compliances**
 - **Explosives Act, 1884 & Explosives Rules, 2008:** Regulate licensing, storage limits, and mandatory safety distances for explosive units.
 - **Factories Act, 1948:** Ensures worker safety through provisions on ventilation, spacing, and fire prevention.
 - **OSH Code, 2020:** Consolidates labour safety laws and fixes employer responsibility in hazardous processes.
 - **Disaster Management Act, 2005:** Treats industrial accidents as human-induced disasters with district-level preparedness obligations.
 - **Institutional Oversight:** PESO, State Labour Department, Fire Services, and District Administration enforce compliance and safety norms.
- **Way Forward**
 - **Stronger Enforcement:** Regular surprise inspections, strict penalties, license cancellation, and criminal liability.
 - **Technology Use:** Digital licensing, real-time inventory tracking, CCTV surveillance, and GIS mapping of hazardous units.
 - **Worker Safety:** Mandatory training, certification, protective gear, and periodic safety drills.
 - **Administrative Accountability:** Clear responsibility of officials and performance audits of safety regulators.
 - **Safer Industrial Design:** Cluster-based zoning with common safety infrastructure and promotion of less hazardous alternatives.
 - **Disaster Preparedness:** On-site emergency plans and coordinated response with hospitals, fire services, and district authorities.

4. **Canada, India negotiating pact to double trade by 2030, says Carney [paper-2]**

IMP: Bilateral Relations

- India and Canada are negotiating a trade pact aimed at doubling bilateral trade by 2030.
- The statement reflects renewed efforts to strengthen economic ties after a period of diplomatic strain.
- **Current Status of India-Canada Trade**
 - Bilateral trade is below potential despite complementarities.
- Major sectors:
 - **India exports:** pharmaceuticals, textiles, IT services, gems & jewellery
 - **Canada exports:** pulses, minerals, fertilisers, energy products

Why This News is IMPORTANT?

- Economic Diplomacy
 - Signals revival of trade-led engagement despite political differences.
 - Reinforces India's strategy of diversifying trade partners.
- Supply Chain & Strategic Interests
 - Canada is rich in critical minerals (lithium, cobalt, nickel) essential for: EVs, Renewable energy
 - Aligns with India's clean energy transition.

Challenges

- Political trust deficit due to Khalistan-related extremism and divergent security perceptions.
- Diaspora politics influencing bilateral relations and slowing diplomatic engagement.
- Trade irritants such as market access barriers, regulatory differences, and visa/labour mobility issues.
- Stalled trade negotiations (CEPA/EPTA) due to political and economic disagreements.
- Limited trade volume despite strong complementarities in goods and services.

Way Forward

- Delink economic cooperation from political disagreements to sustain engagement.
- Resume and conclude CEPA/EPTA through phased, sector-specific agreements.
- Strengthen cooperation in critical minerals, clean energy, education, and technology.
- Establish institutional dialogue mechanisms on security and diaspora-related concerns.
- Promote people-to-people ties and business-to-business engagement to rebuild trust.

5. Nine Botswana cheetahs released into Kuno park [PAPER-3]

IMP: Cheetah reintroduction Project

- Nine cheetahs from Botswana have been released into **Kuno National Park, Madhya Pradesh**.
- The move is part of **India's Cheetah Reintroduction Project** to restore the species after extinction in India.
- This was the third batch of cheetahs to arrive from an African nation after the first batch of eight big cats from Namibia in September 2022, and another from South Africa in February 2023.
- Apart from the 45 cheetahs at Kuno, three translocated adults are at the Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh's Mandsoor and Neemuch districts.
- **Objectives of the Project**
 - Biodiversity restoration and ecological balance.
 - Revival of a top predator in Indian grasslands.
 - Promote eco-tourism and conservation awareness.
- **Kuno national park:**
 - Situated in the Vindhyan Hills of Madhya Pradesh, the park is traversed by the Kuno River, a tributary of the Chambal River.

CHEETAH IN INDIA – STATUS & COMPARISON

CHEETAH STATUS IN INDIA

- ✓ Cheetah became **EXTINCT IN INDIA IN 1952** due to overhunting, habitat loss, and prey decline.
- ✓ Launched **PROJECT CHEETAH (2022)** to reintroduce the species.
- ✓ **Translocations:**
 - Namibia (Sept 2022) - First batch
 - South Africa (Feb 2023) - Second batch
 - Botswana (recent) - Third batch
- ✓ **Present locations:** Kuno National Park (Madhya Pradesh)
- ✓ **Aim:** Establish a **SELF-SUSTAINING CHEETAH POPULATION** and restore grassland ecosystems.

ASIATIC VS AFRICAN CHEETAH

Asiatic Cheetah	African Cheetah
<i>Acinonyx jubatus venaticus</i>	<i>Acinonyx jubatus jubatus</i>
Scientific Name: <i>Acinonyx jubatus venaticus</i>	<i>Acinonyx jubatus jubatus</i> ♂
Native Range: India (extinct), now	Sub-Saharan Africa
IUCN Status:	Vulnerable
Population: < 50 in wild	~7,000+
Body Size: Smaller, leaner	Larger, robust
Fur: Pale, thicker coat	Golden-yellow coat
India Connection: Native subsp -	Reintroduced under Project Cheetah
Habitat: Arid & semi-arid - plains	Savannas & grasslands

WHY PROJECT CHEETAH MATTERS

- ✓ Only **LARGE CARNIVORE EXTINCT IN INDEPENDENT INDIA**.
- ✓ First intercontinental **LARGE CARNIVORE REINTRODUCTION PROJECT**.
- ✓ Promotes **GRASSLAND CONSERVATION**, a neglected ecosystem.
- ✓ Enhances **BIODIVERSITY** and **ECO-TOURISM**.

PROJECT CHEETAH is a landmark conservation initiative aimed at restoring India's lost grassland predator while strengthening ecosystem balance.

- The ecosystem is a dry deciduous forest dominated by Kardhai, Salai, and Palash trees. Wildlife includes the Indian leopard, dhole, sambar, and extensive bird species.
- **Challenges:** Key challenges include managing habitat capacity, ensuring prey base, and mitigating human-wildlife conflict.

6. PM launches HPV vaccination drive for 14-yr-old girls

What is the News:

- The **Prime Minister** has launched a **nationwide HPV vaccination drive** targeting **14-year-old girls**.
- The initiative aims to **prevent cervical cancer** and strengthen **women's health and empowerment**.
- A single-dose '**Gardasil 4**' vaccine, a **quadrivalent HPV vaccine**, will be used under the campaign. The injection provides protection against **HPV types 16 and 18**, which are responsible for **cervical cancer**, as well as **types 6 and 11**.
- Cervical cancer is the second most common cancer among Indian women, with about 1.2 lakh new cases and nearly 80,000 deaths annually as per WHO GLOBOCAN 2022.
- **Cervical cancer** is a **preventable** cancer of the cervix mainly caused by long-term infection with high-risk HPV strains.

What is HPV (Human Papillomavirus)?

- HPV is a **common sexually transmitted virus** with more than **200 identified types**.
- Certain **high-risk HPV types (16 & 18)** are responsible for nearly **70% of cervical cancer cases worldwide**.
- Other HPV types (6 & 11) cause **genital warts** and non-cancerous lesions.
- HPV infection is usually **asymptomatic**, allowing the virus to persist unnoticed for years.

Cervical Cancer Burden in India

- Cervical cancer is the **2nd most common cancer among Indian women**, after breast cancer.
- India accounts for a **significant proportion of global cervical cancer deaths**.
- Late diagnosis and limited screening worsen outcomes, especially in rural areas.

Global & National Alignment

- Aligns with **WHO's Cervical Cancer Elimination Strategy** (90-70-90 targets).
- Supports **National Health Policy, 2017**, which prioritizes preventive care.
- Contributes to **SDG-3 (Good Health & Well-being)**.

7. J&K cricket team scripts history, wins maiden Ranji title

- In the 2025-26 season, the competition was contested by 38 teams, including at least one team from each of the 28 states and four of the eight union territories

Origin:

- The Ranji Trophy is **India's premier domestic first-class** cricket tournament. Played in the longest format (**four-day matches**) similar to Test cricket.
- It is Organised annually by the **Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)**.
- The championship was **first Organised in 1934-35**, with the inaugural match held between **Madras and Mysore** at the **M. A. Chidambaram Stadium** on **4 November 1934**.
- The Ranji Trophy is named after **Kumar Shri Ranjitsinhji**, who was the **first Indian** to play international cricket and represented England in Test matches.
- **Mumbai** has won the most Ranji Trophy titles (42).